**[STATE & BRANCH TOOLS](https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/governance-tools/state-branch/)**

**Membership Matters: A News Hub for Leaders**

**January 2021**

*Resources, tips and tricks for AAUW state and branch leaders*

**A BRANCH HITS 100**

**Hope Comes to Battle Creek**

AAUW of Battle Creek (Michigan) recently installed a bronze statue, “What’s Next World?,” which was commissioned to mark the branch’s centennial. Their members celebrated 100 years in 2017 with a formal dinner and awards program. Also announced that evening was a gift to the community from the branch, a bronze statue to be installed on the campus of Kellogg Community College.

Member Sandy Ranger suggested artist Paula Blincoe to create the sculpture that the branch now refers to as “Hope.” Paula grew up in the Battle Creek area, attended Harper Creek Schools and Kellogg Community College. One of her other creations is a bas relief piece that sits in the lobby of the W. K. Kellogg Foundation.

**Bragging on Branches (and States!)**

Greatest Needs Greatest Hits

On the heels of a year like no other, we’re so proud and grateful for all the branches that stood up for equity by donating $5,000 or more to Greatest Needs or Strategic Focus Areas. We know 2020 proved challenging on many levels, and that makes us all the more appreciative for those who found creative ways to develop effective programming, recruitment and fundraising.

Huge thank you to: AAUW Healdsburg (Calif.), AAUW Marin (Calif.), AAUW Morgan Hill (Calif.), AAUW San Francisco (Calif.), AAUW Atlanta (Ga.), AAUW Honolulu (Hawaii), AAUW Springfield (Ill.), AAUW Naperville Area (Ill.), AAUW Midland (Mich.), AAUW Frederick (Md.), AAUW Somerset Hills (N.J.), AAUW Ashland (Ore.), AAUW Walla Walla (Wash.), AAUW Appleton (Wis.), AAUW Racine (Wis.).

Meet Our Latest Five-Star Awardees

Congratulations to AAUW Virginia on becoming the first state to achieve all five stars in our [Five-Star Recognition Program](https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/initiatives/5-star-program/)! AAUW Virginia set a tremendous example of what states and branches can accomplish together and strengthens our hope for a 2021 where more women are safe and economically secure. We look forward to more state affiliates following in Virginia’s footsteps.

Have questions about the state application or portal? Reach out to Fivestar@aauw.org and let us know how we can help get your application started.

Kudos also to the following branches on their recent Five-Star achievements: (Arizona) Southeast Valley; (California) Citrus Heights – American River, San Clemente-Capistrano Bay, Santa Cruz Valley; (Colorado) Lakewood; (Florida) Saint Augustine; (Illinois) Naperville; (Maine) Waterville; (Michigan) Ann Arbor; (New Mexico) Las Cruces; (Pennsylvania) West Chester – Chester County; (Texas) West Harris County; (South Carolina) Horry County; (Virginia) Springfield-Annandale; (Wisconsin) Appleton; (Washington) Walla Walla. Thank you all for your participation and hard work!

And a special shout-out to AAUW Citrus Heights-American River (California) on completing the program with all five stars! Read the success stories below to learn more about the journey of AAUW Virginia and AAUW Citrus Heights-American River.

**Success Stories**

Get inspiration and advice from this month’s five-star branch leaders.

AAUW Virginia’s “Strive for Five”

 “We applied to the Five-Star National Recognition Program after noticing we already achieved goals that would lead us to receive stars. Each star we earned encouraged us to ‘strive for five.’

For years, our robust public policy program included annual meetings with the governor and/or lieutenant governor and state lobby days, which recently focused on ERA ratification and pay equity. After mentoring a University of Virginia student who researched pay equity, we helped other students to study AAUW’s issues.

Our branch members have given generously to AAUW’s Greatest Needs Fund and worked to retain and expand membership. Our communications team modernized our website and social media outreach. Despite cancelling in-person activities because of the pandemic, we reached large audiences through virtual activities. To meet the “Governance and Sustainability” goal, our board adopted a robust Strategic Plan and Succession Plan, which fine-tuned our mission-related activities and future leadership.

We are proud that Virginia has seven star-winning branches—three of which are five-star awardees. We urge other affiliates to start with the goals that are already part of their activities or only require limited additional effort to attain and then organize to achieve further stars.”

—Suzanne Rothwell and Leslie Tourigny, co-presidents

AAUW Citrus Heights-American River (California): A Strategic Framework for Success

“The single most important tool in achieving our Five Stars is the Strategic Plan. The plan did not include all we did, but it provided the framework. We used it to accomplish our goals, and we used Zoom to communicate with women, girls and political leaders, both nationally and internationally, during the pandemic.

In our Five-Star journey, we:
• Partnered with AAUW @ ARC Student Club to present Work Smart salary-negotiation workshops.
• Developed virtual training classes to teach 7th and 8th grade girls about careers in science, technology, engineering and math.
• Prepared hygiene kits so women and girls in third-world countries could go to school and work.
• Conducted a study to assess whether scholarships help students escape poverty.
• Helped establish a Commission for Women and Girls that looked at how policies and law unduly impact women and girls.
• Conducted study groups focused on women overcoming adversity, embracing diversity, and succeeding.
• Met with political representatives on equal pay, Title IX, Title VII and the ERA.

Two of our unique programs will reverberate into the future: The Sacramento County Commission on the Status of Women and Girls and the study on scholarships that help women and their children escape poverty.”

—Lee Battershell, president

**News & Resources**

Calling all AAUW Artists!

It’s time for AAUW members to flex their creative muscles in our 12th annual art contest! Do you have stunning photography, a stellar sculpture, or a thought-provoking painting to share? Your work could be among the winners featured on a special collection of notecards in the spring. Visit the [2021 art contest web page](https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/initiatives/art-contest/) to review submission guidelines and enter your work!

AAUW National Election Comment Period Opens Monday

This spring members will be asked to vote in the [AAUW National Election](https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/governance-tools/national-election/) on amendments to the Public Policy Priorities and bylaws, in addition to electing members to the national Board of Directors. Every AAUW member has the right to comment on proposed changes to the bylaws or Public Policy Priorities before they are put to the membership for a vote. The comment period opens Monday, January 11, and comments and proposed amendments can be submitted until February 5 at 5:00 pm ET.

Top Webinars of 2020

While the pandemic made it impossible for AAUW to host in-person gatherings last year, we extended our reach to more AAUW members than ever through our [virtual 2020 Convenings](https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/initiatives/2020-convening/). Thank you for joining us and stay tuned for more webinars in 2021.

Here are our top 5 webinars of 2020:

[Holding Space: How to Start and Continue Conversations on Race, Equity and Inclusion](https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&emci=e8aec0e0-6636-eb11-9fb4-00155d43b2cd&emdi=ea000000-0000-0000-0000-000000000001&ceid=5425278&v=KLpBL-FH0Vk&feature=youtu.be): AAUW Fellow alumna Dr. Taharee Jackson leads this conversation on why being able to talk about race is critical to achieving equity.

[Interview with Diane Rehm](https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&emci=e8aec0e0-6636-eb11-9fb4-00155d43b2cd&emdi=ea000000-0000-0000-0000-000000000001&ceid=5425278&v=HetR5ABj4Lo&feature=youtu.be): CEO Kim Churches talks with renowned radio host and author Diane Rehm about how she has managed to remain resilient in the face of challenges and loss.

[Archeology of the Self: Sustaining Racial Literacy in the Movement for Change:](https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&emci=e8aec0e0-6636-eb11-9fb4-00155d43b2cd&emdi=ea000000-0000-0000-0000-000000000001&ceid=5425278&v=JoDZQGBTc1g&feature=youtu.be) AAUW Fellow alumna Yolanda Sealy-Ruiz takes us on a collective journey of the “Archeology of the Self” — an action-oriented process requiring love, humility, reflection and a commitment to working against racial injustice.

[Is Your Perspective Inclusive?](https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&emci=e8aec0e0-6636-eb11-9fb4-00155d43b2cd&emdi=8ca034b0-cc3f-eb11-a607-00155d43c992&ceid=984747&v=uQ3_cY5lEbc&feature=youtu.be): Lisette Garcia, Ph.D., Pamela Fuller and Sheila Amo explore unconscious bias and what it means to have an inclusive perspective.

[Perspectives from the AAUW Legal Advocacy Fund: Justice Ginsburg’s Legacy and the Future of the Court](https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&emci=e8aec0e0-6636-eb11-9fb4-00155d43b2cd&emdi=ea000000-0000-0000-0000-000000000001&ceid=5425278&v=RFDFPWz4q3o&feature=youtu.be): AAUW’s Public Policy team discusses Justice Ginsburg’s legacy and AAUW’s role in shaping history.

New Inclusion & Equity Resources

AAUW’s Inclusion & Equity committee has rolled out a comprehensive [new toolkit of resources](https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/governance-tools/dei-toolkit/) and tips that highlight how critical diversity, equity and inclusion are to AAUW’s long-term prospects. The toolkit includes dozens of resources to help you lead branch workshops, broaden your membership and further your own learning.

AAUW Welcomes New Legacy Circle Members

We gratefully acknowledge these visionary AAUW members and supporters who have recently joined the Legacy Circle: Karen Burley (California), Judy W. Cavin Brown (California), Dorcas K. Doering (Kansas), Carolyn Eggleston (California), Claudia Foreman (Texas) and Patricia Sanford (Texas). By making a planned gift to AAUW National, each has embraced equity for future generations of women and girls as part of her personal legacy.

If you have included AAUW National in your estate plans, please contact AAUW Director of Advancement Heather Miller at 202.785.7766 to let us know so that we may celebrate you, too, as a new member of the Legacy Circle!

Are You a Member in Good Standing?

With the AAUW Art Contest and National Elections coming up or under way, remember that you must be a current member to participate. AAUW is preparing to take a count of your branch members for February 1. Please check your Branch Member Roster in the [Member Services Database](https://ww3.aauw.org/login/?redirect_to=/aauw_redirect/wp_redirect_msd.php) against your records to ensure all memberships have been received and processed by the national office before January 31, 2021.